

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 10197

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT

SUBJECT: CHURCH SUBCOMMITTEE ON MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

REF: ROME 10163

1. AS STATED REFTEL PARA 3, WE HAVE NO PRECISE INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC STATUTES THAT MAY BE INVOLVED IN MAGISTRATES INVESTIGATIONS AND ANY CHARGES THAT MAY HERAFTER BE FILED. HOWEVER, WE DO KNOW THAT AS A RESULT OF A MAGISTRATE'S INVESTIGATION IN GENOA A WARRANT OF ARREST WAS ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 8, 1974 OFR VINCENZO CAZZANIGA ON CHARGES OF BRIBERY AND CONSPIRACY. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS THE CHARGES RELATED TO HIS ACTIVITIES WHEN HE WAS PRESIDENT OF UNIONE PETROLIFERA AND ESSO ITALIANA, AND, IN PARTICULAR, TO AN ALLEGED PAYMENT OF 1.2 BILLION LIRE TO INFLUENCE A GOVERNMENT DECISION IN FAVOR OF OIL AND AGAINST NUCLEAR ENERGY AS A SOURCE OF ELECTRICITY. THE WARRANT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY REVOKED ON APRIL 3, 1974 BY THE PARLIAMENTARY INVESTIGATING COMMISSION FOR PROCEEDINGS ON ACCUSATIONS (AGAINST MINSITERS), WITHOUT ANY EXPLANATION OTHER THAN THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD TAKE HIS TESTIMONY. ON FEBRUARY 19, 1974, CAZZANIGS'S SECRETARY, CARLO CITTADINI, WAS ARRESTED AND IMPRISONED. HE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED (LIBERTA PROVVISORIA) AND NO FURTHER ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN AGAINST HIM TO DATE. AT THE SAME TIME, A WARRANT OF ARREST WAS ISSUED AGAINST GREGORIO ARCIDIACONO, ON THE SAME CHARGES AS STATED AGAINST CAZZANIGA. ARCIDIACONO WAS A VICE PRESIDENT OF UNIONE PETROLIFERA. HE HAS NOT BEEN FOUND AND THE WARRANT HAS NOT BEEN SERVED.

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2. THE MAGISTRATE IN GENOA ON FEBRUARY 19, 1974 SENT EVIDENCE THAT HE HAD GATHERED TO THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION MENTIONED ABOVE FOR EXAMINATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY OF THE FOLLOWING EX-MINISTERS HAD ENGAGED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: MAURO FERRI, ATHOS VALSECCHI, LUIGI PRETI, GIACINTO BOSCO, MARIO FERRARI-AGGRADE, AND GIULIO ANDREOTTI. ON MARCH 8, 1974 THE COMMISSION DECIDED NOT TO PROCEED WITH INVESTIGATION OF CHARGES AGAINST THE LAST FOUR. ONLY THE FILES ON FERRI AND VLASECCHI WERE TO BE EXAMINED FURTHER. ABOUT MAY 28, 1975, THE DECISION WAS MADE TO CHARGE FERRI FOR SOLICITING BRIBES. CASE ON VALSECCHI IS STILL OPEN.

3. NOTE RE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH: UNDER THE ITALIAN SYSTEM, THE INVESTIGATIVE FUNCTION (USUALLY DONE IN THE US BY GRAND JURIES) IS PERFORMED BY THE MAGISTRATES. IF THEIR INVESTIGATION INDICATES THAT A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT MAY HAVE COMMITTED A CRIMINAL ACT WHILE HE WAS A MINISTER, THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION ARE REFERRED TO THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION MENTIONED ABOVE. IF THE COMMISSION DECIDES THAT THE ACCUSED MINISTER IS NOT GUILTY, THE MATTER IS ENDED; IF THE COMMISSION CONCLUDES THAT HE IS GUILTY, THE MATTER IS REFERRED TO THE FULL PARLIAMENT (BOTH HOUSES SITTING TOGETHER WHICH ALSO MAKES A GULTY/NOT GUILTY FINDING. IF GUILTY, FINAL DECISION AND SENTENCE IS BY CONSTITUTIONAL COURT.

4. FINALLY, WE WISH TO REGISTER EMBASSY CONCERN ABOUT POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THESE HEARINGS ON US-ITALIAN RELATIONS AND ON THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE IN ITALY. SINCE MUCH OF THE INFORMATION DESCRIBED IN PARAS 1(A) AND (B) OF STATE 164677 HAS ALREADY APPEARED IN THE ITALIAN PRESS, ITS REPETITION WILL NOT CAUSE MUCH DAMAGE. HOWEVER, IF THE REVELATIONS GO BEYOND THOSE MATTERS TO NAME INDIVIDUALS AND TO DESCRIBE SPECIFIC PAYMENTS FOR SPECIFIC ACTS (I.E. BRIBERY), THE REACTION IS APT TO BE STRONG. THOSE INVOLVED, SOME OF WHOM MAY STILL BE IN THE GOVERNMENT, WILL WITH SOME REASON FEEL THAT THEY HAVE BEEN CONVICTED (BY A US SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE) WITHOUT A TRIAL. THIS WILL EASILY BE TRANSLATED INTO CHARGES OF US INTERFERENCE IN ITALIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS(I.E., THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AN ITALIAN COMPANY (EVEN THOUGH US-OWNED) AND THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT). BY THE SAME TOKEN, THE REVERSE ENGLISH WILL BRIGHTEN THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S CLAIMS TO BE THE ONLY CLEAN AND HONEST PARTY IN ITALY. THE POTENTIAL POLITICAL EFFECTS HERE ARE THUS EXPLOSIVE AND WE VERY MUCH HOPE THAT PUBLIC DISCLOSURES

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CAN BE KEPT WITHIN THE LIMITS STATED IN STATE 164677.VOLPE

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